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MG, PINR, PREL, TBIO, HK, CH

SUBJECT: HONG KONG H1N1 UPDATE - HK SCHOOLS REMAIN CLOSED,
MACAU CONFIRMS LOCAL TRANSMISSION

REF: A. A) HONG KONG 1065

[1](#)B. B) HONG KONG 1109

[1](#)1. Summary: The number of H1N1 cases in Hong Kong continues to climb, while Macau has gone from zero cases to eight, including the first instance of community transmission, in the last six days. In response to the continued outbreak in Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Government (HKG) announced June 23 that all nursery, kindergarten and primary schools would suspend classes for the remainder of the school year. Macau's Health Bureau raised the pandemic alert level to 6 following confirmation of the first case of community transmission. End Summary.

Hong Kong) Rapid Spread but Adequate Response

[1](#)2. Hong Kong continues to experience a rapid surge in the number of confirmed H1N1 infections. 60 new cases were identified June 23, bringing the total in Hong Kong to 408. Most of these cases are now attributed to community transmission. The response measures in place (Ref B) remain unchanged and the HKG considers their current response to the pandemic to be adequate. Hong Kong health officials continue to review the response measures, however, and can be expected to adjust them as warranted by the extent and severity of the outbreak.

[1](#)3. Consistent with earlier statements, the HKG reviewed school closures June 23 and made the decision to suspend classes for the remainder of the school year for all nursery, kindergarten and primary schools (Ref A). In addition, between June 11 and June 23 the HKG ordered 23 secondary schools closed, each for a two-week period, after students at those schools tested positive for H1N1. Each of these schools will be reviewed and, if determined infection-free by the HKG, will be allowed to reopen and resume classes. Several of these schools have effectively finished their school years and will not reopen, while others will reopen for end-of-year testing.

Macau) Community Transmission Raises Alert Level

[1](#)4. Macau officials identified the first H1N1 case June 18. As of June 23, there have been eight confirmed cases. The first community transmission case was confirmed June 23, prompting Macau's Health Bureau to raise the pandemic alert level to 6, their highest level. This moves Macau to the same response level as Hong Kong and the World Health Organization (WHO). Macau's Pandemic Alert Level 6 has four sub-levels, from least (blue) to most severe (red). The

current level is 6-blue, indicating a "moderate local epidemic situation." Macau Health Director Lei Chin-ion stated that if more than 20 H1N1 patients are hospitalized at once, they will move to the next sub-level. The Health Bureau published new response guidance on June 24 that does not call for school closures but suspends extracurricular activities. The new guidance also calls for voluntary health screening at public venues including government offices, hotels and casinos.

DONOVAN